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The City University of New York
Graduate Center: 33 West 42 Street, New York, N. Y. 10036



Ph.D. Program in Philosophy

November 20, 1970

Professor Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
Stanford University School of Medicine
Stanford University Medical Center
Stanford, California
94305

Dear Professor Lederberg:

Please pardon my delay in answering. Your letter was forwarded to me at my new position.

I am, of course, honored by your having read my article, but am also sorry to have caused you grief. The reason why I interpreted your remarks as a "threat" is that you seemed to be saying that one way or another-- despite "overzealous policing" or through "forcing their use on society"-- "seemingly bizarre genetic experiments" are going to be done; moreover, they must be allowed to be done. (The only other statement of yours that I have read is your letter in Atlantic, March, 1969, commenting on Fleming's piece. This was subsequent to my article. Had I read your letter first, I still think I would have interpreted you in the way I did.) Perhaps the word "threat" was a wrong one to use. Also, I should have been more cautious than to make use of a newspaper report, which might very well have been inaccurate and out-of-context. But I gather that you have no objections over the accuracy.

I should add a word about my sentence: "The legal control of biological engineering is itself liable to abuse..." Given a legal structure of control it would not only be possible to stifle research that should be done, but it will also be easier to make-- what I would regard as-- bad uses of biomedical technology. I fear that we are in fact likely to end up with both of these results.

The copy of my Monist article is enclosed. I hope you find something of interest in it. I look forward with eagerness to the assembly of writings that you mentioned. If you have an offprint of a piece that you think would be appropriate for me, I would appreciate your sending it.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Martin Golding'.

Martin Golding
Professor of Philosophy

MG:ms

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Professor Joshua Lederberg

P.S. In my UCLA article "atopogenics" should read "atypogenics" -- a needless barbarism in any case.

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